

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ATHENS 03090 01 OF 02 221048Z

16

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 CU-02 SIL-01 LAB-04 SCCT-01 AID-05

CCO-00 OC-05 OPR-02 USSS-00 SCA-01 A-01 OMB-01 SY-05

FBO-02 SCS-03 IO-10 /094 W

----- 117246

O 221015Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8460

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA IMMEDIATE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 ATHENS 3090

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: AFSP ASEC GR US

SUBJ: DAMAGE TO EMBASSY: DISCUSSION WITH BITSIOS

REF ATHENS 3080

1. FOREIGN MINISTER BITSIOS TELEPHONED ME THIS MORNING TO SAY THAT HE HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED BY PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS TO EXPRESS THE DEEP REGRET OF THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE GREEK GOVERNMENT FOR WHAT HAPPENED IN ATHENS LAST NIGHT AND THE DAMAGE TO OUR EMBASSY HERE (REFTEL). BITSIOS SAID THAT THE GREEK GOVERNMENT WOULD OF COURSE PAY THE COST OF THE DAMAGE DONE TO THE EMBASSY. HE ADDED THAT HE WAS PERSONALLY DISTRESSED BY WHAT HAD HAPPENED.

2. ALTHOUGH I HAD CALMED DOWN SOME DURING THE NIGHT, I WAS STILL EXTREMELY ANGRY ABOUT LAST NIGHT'S EVENTS. I MADE NO COMMENT ON THE MESSAGE FROM CARAMANLIS OR BITSIOS BUT REQUESTED TO SEE BITSIOS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE
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PAGE 02 ATHENS 03090 01 OF 02 221048Z

THIS MORNING. HE AGREED TO SEE ME AT 1030 A.M. WHEN

I WENT TO BITSIOS' OFFICE, I GAVE HIM THE FOLLOWING ORAL MESSAGE, READING FROM NOTES I HAD PREPARED.

3. I TOLD BITSIOS THAT MY STAFF AT THE EMBASSY AND I HAD NOT YET HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO FULLY ASSESS THE DAMAGES DONE TO THE EMBASSY LAST NIGHT. I SAID THAT IT APPEARED THAT PERSONAL INJURIES TO AMERICAN PERSONNEL IN THE EMBASSY WERE SLIGHT, ALTHOUGH APPARENTLY THERE WERE SOME. I ALSO SAID THAT THERE HAD NOT BEEN AN OPPORTUNITY AS YET FOR ME TO CONSULT FULLY AND RECEIVE INSTRUCTIONS ON THE MATTER FROM THE USG IN WASHINGTON.

4. HOWEVER, I WENT ON, I COULD NOT FAIL TO LET HIM KNOW AT ONCE OF MY OWN PERSONAL SENSE OF DEEP OUTRAGE AND INDIGNATION AT WHAT HAPPENED LAST NIGHT, WHICH I CONSIDERED TO BE TOTALLY UNJUSTIFIED. I SAID IT WAS NOT JUST AMERICAN PROPERTY THAT HAD BEEN ATTACKED AND DESTROYED, IT WAS THE EMBASSY OF THE USG WHICH THE GREEK GOVERNMENT HAD THE RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT. I SAID THAT THE SAFETY AND WELL BEING OF US OFFICIALS SENT HERE TO CONDUCT BUSINESS WITH THE GOG, INCLUDING MY OWN, HAD BEEN THREATENED, AND THAT MY WIFE AND I HAD BEEN ASKED TO LEAVE OUR RESIDENCE QUICKLY LAST NIGHT, ABOUT 200 YARDS FROM THE EMBASSY, BECAUSE THE POLICE HAD LOST CONTROL OF THE SITUATION. I SAID THERE WAS AMPLE NOTICE AND WARNING OF THE PLAN OF THIS MOB TO MARCH PAST THE EMBASSY, ABOUT WHICH BITSIOS HIMSELF HAD YESTERDAY EXPRESSED SURPRISE TO ME AS BEING TOTALLY UNRELATED TO THE APRIL 21 COMMEMORATIVE EVENT.

5. I REQUESTED THAT THE GOG HENCEFORTH PROVIDE ALL REQUIRED PROTECTION TO THE U.S. EMBASSY AND ITS PERSONNEL.

6. I TOLD BITSIOS THAT I EXPECTED TO BE IN TOUCH WITH HIM AGAIN ABOUT THIS MATTER IN THE NEAR FUTURE AFTER WE HAD HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO ASSESS FULLY THE EVENTS AND DAMAGES OF LAST NIGHT AND TO CONSULT WITH WASHINGTON ABOUT THE MATTER.

7. HAVING IN MIND SOME OF BITSIOS' RECENT REPRESENTATIONS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 ATHENS 03090 01 OF 02 221048Z

TO ME ABOUT ALLEGED STATEMENTS OF HIGH USG OFFICIALS, I TOLD HIM THAT THE EVENTS OF LAST NIGHT COULD NOT HELP BUT BE COUNTERPRODUCTIVE IN TERMS OF THE INTERESTS OF GREECE AND THE GREEK PEOPLE.

8. BITSIOS AGREED THAT LAST NIGHT'S EVENTS WOULD BE UN-HELPFUL TO GREECE AND ONCE AGAIN EXPRESSED THE DEEPEST REGRET OF THE GREEK GOVERNMENT FOR WHAT HAD HAPPENED. HE

SAID THAT HE HAD BEEN TOUCH WITH CARAMANLIS A SECOND
TIME SINCE OUR TELEPHONE CONVERSATION THIS MORNING AND
THIS PARTICULAR MEETING AND THAT CARAMANLIS WAS QUITE

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PAGE 01 ATHENS 03090 02 OF 02 221054Z

16

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FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8461

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA IMMEDIATE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 2 OF 2 ATHENS 3090

CONCERNED ABOUT WHAT HAD
HAPPENED. HE SAID THAT THE PRIME MINISTER'S DEEP CONCERN
AND INTEREST WAS SPONTANEOUS AND COMPLETELY SINCERE AND HE
HOPED VERY MUCH THAT THE DAMAGE TO THE EMBASSY COULD BE
REPAIRED PROMPTLY AND THAT WE COULD PUT THIS INCIDENT
BEHIND US. BITSIOS ASKED IF I HAD ANY INDICATION THAT THE
GREEK POLICE HAD NOT DONE THEIR DUTY OR HAD IN SOME WAY
COOPERATED WITH THE DEMONSTRATORS TO ALLOW THE ATTACK
AGAINST OUR EMBASSY TO TAKE PLACE. I SAID THAT IT WAS
NOT FOR ME TO JUDGE THE PERFORMANCE OF THE GREEK POLICE,
THAT WAS FOR THE GREEK GOVERNMENT TO DO, BUT ALL ONE HAD
TO DO WAS TO HAVE A LOOK AT THE EXTENSIVE DAMAGE DONE TO
OUR EMBASSY LAST NIGHT, WHERE THE ENTIRE CONSULAR WING OF
THE BUILDING HAD BEEN HEAVILY DAMAGED AND PUT OUT OF COMMISSION,
IN ORDER TO DRAW CONCLUSIONS ABOUT WHETHER THE GREEK GOVERNMENT AND
THE GREEK POLICE HAD FULFILLED THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES.

AS FAR AS ANY IMPLIED COLLUSION BETWEEN THE GREEK POLICE AND
THE DEMONSTRATORS,I SAID THAT I HAD RECEIVED NO
REPORTS TO THAT EFFECT.
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PAGE 02 ATHENS 03090 02 OF 02 221054Z

8. COMMENT: ON MY INSTRUCTIONS, THE EMBASSY HAS NOT RELEASED ANY
OFFICIAL STATEMENT TO THE PRESS CONCERNING THE EVENTS
OF LAST NIGHT. THE EMBASSY SPOKESMAN HAS BEEN AUTHORIZED,
HOWEVER, TO RESPOND TO CERTAIN TYPES OF QUESTIONS AND GIVE
FACTUAL REPLIES. FOR EXAMPLE, WE ARE CONFIRMING THE
ATTACK ON THE EMBASSY AND THE NATURE AND THE EXTENT OF THE
DAMAGE DONE. WE ARE CONFIRMING THAT THE GREEK GOVERNMENT
HAS BEEN IN TOUCH WITH US ABOUT THE MATTER, WITHOUT SPECIFYING
WHO IN THE GREEK GOVERNMENT OR DISCLOSING WHAT THE CONTENT
HAS BEEN OF THE GOG MESSAGE TO US, SINCE WE BELIEVE IT
PREFERABLE AND UNDERSTAND THAT THE GOG WILL SPEAK FOR ITSELF.
WE ARE ALSO STATING, IF ASKED, THAT THE AMBASSADOR HAS
VISITED THE GREEK FOREIGN MINISTER THIS MORNING AND "MADE
HIS VIEWS KNOWN" CONCERNING THE EVENTS OF LAST NIGHT.
WE ARE NOT ALLOWING OURSELVES TO BE DRAWN INTO
SPECULATIVE QUESTIONS SUCH AS HOW BIG THE CROWD WAS,
WHY THEY ATTACKED THE EMBASSY, THE MONETARY AMOUNT OF
DAMAGES TO THE EMBASSY (AT THIS POINT), WHETHER THE GREEK
POLICE DID WELL OR NOT, ETC. WE ARE ALSO REFRAINING, FOR
THE PRESENT AT LEAST, FROM STATING THAT WE HAVE LODGED
ANY "PROTEST" WITH THE GOG, SINCE I BELIEVE I MUST CONSULT
WITH THE DEPARTMENT AND BE SO INSTRUCTED BEFORE LODGING
AN OFFICIAL USG "PROTEST", ALTHOUGH THERE IS NO DOUBT
WHATSOEVER IN MY MIND THAT ONE IS WARRANTED. IF THE
DEPARTMENT CONCURS, WE CAN LODGE THE OFFICIAL PROTEST
TOGETHER WITH A NOTE SUMMARIZING OUR EXPECTATION
TO BE COMPENSATED FOR DAMAGES DONE AND TO BE PROVIDED WITH
ALL REQUIRED PROTECTION IN THE FUTURE.
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